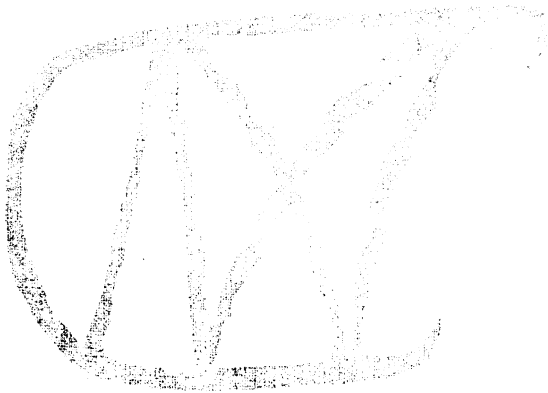


A thorough takedown of christianity such as Øverland's *10th Plague* might lack the immediacy it did when he first delivered it to a bewildered audience of university students in Oslo in 1933. We live in an altogether different world than its author, who was arrested and charged with blasphemy for it.

So, although we don't live in a christian-dominated culture *in the same way* Øverland did, we realize that a critique of religious thinking is still a worthwhile project, which is precisely what he is up to here. Lacking any directly anti-religious texts in our catalog thus far, we decided it was time to rectify this omission – a stroke of synchronicity catalyzed the project when our friend and translator, Raude, shared this unknown gem with us. Never before appearing in print in English, *Christianity – The 10th Plague* offers a humorous and, given the context, pretty bold take on the holiest of holies – enjoy!

ENEMY COMBATANT PUBLICATIONS



Locust Grove, Indiana



Christianity: The Tenth Plague

by Arnulf Øverland

Introduction: Arnulf Øverland

Arnulf Øverland was born in Kristiansund, Norway on April 27th, 1889. When he was very young, the Øverlands moved to the bustling port city of Bergen. In 1904, they moved to Oslo, at the time known as Kristiania. Little Arnulf was put into schools where christianity permeated everything and was taught as a large part of the curriculum. He hated it. He was quoted at one point in a radio interview as saying he was "constantly being punished."

Arnulf Øverland was a poet, first and foremost. Throughout his life, he published 16 books of poetry. He published his first book of poetry when he was 22 years old, called *Den Ensomme Fest* (*The Lonely Feast*). His earlier work tends to deal with longing, dreams and urban alienation and often has a very palpable melancholy that looms heavy behind everything: themes that would also flow through much of his later work.

In 1911, just after the release of *Den Ensomme Fest*, he fell ill. He was admitted into a sanatorium and began a battle with tuberculosis. He survived and was quoted as saying, "It was only the student in me that died." This may have been a significant turning point in his writing career. Around this time, his poetry seems to adopt a different tone. A bit more outward and with more social commentary, more politically engaged. And as WWI began to break out a few years later, his focus certainly shifted towards a violent, chaotic and tumultuous Europe.

In January of 1933, to an assembly of university students in Oslo, he gave the infamous lecture, "Kristendommen – Den Tiende Landeplage" ("Christianity- The Tenth Plague"). One can see it: a frigid winter morning in a muted metropolis. A quiet and unassuming man in his forties, walks through the college campus

He wears a simple suit and tie, carries a well-used briefcase, and has a smirk that no one notices. He enters the crowded auditorium, clears his throat, steadies his nerve. And here, The Dark Satirist, The Anti-Prophet, has infiltrated the university. He lets loose his tongue with an outburst of torrential criticism. Unforgiving, unashamed, razor sharp, and often with a blackened sense of humor, he leaves the audience dumbfounded. Theologians, university officials and good, kind, wholesome citizens alike, are in an uproar. Arnulf Øverland was arrested, brought before the courts and charged with blasphemy. Before a panel of

jurors, he was one vote shy of being convicted and was set free.

A few years later he was awoken one night from a frenzied vision, and he retells the fevered dream that assaulted him. This became his most well-known poem, one that most Norwegians still know today. It's entitled, "Du må ikke sove" ("You must not sleep"), first published in 1936. It's a desperate plea from a man fighting his fate, a call to arms, and above all, a screaming warning. The Nazis will invade Norway! He and his wife Margrete Aamot copied and distributed this burning text, amongst others. They were both very active in an underground network of rebels who wrote, printed and distributed anti-fascist pamphlets. In June of 1941, Arnulf and Margrete were arrested by the Gestapo.

He spent one year in a single cell in Møllergata 19, a Norwegian police station commandeered by the Nazis and used as a prison. He was not allowed to read, and he tried to write if he could, but "someone was always watching him." He managed to somehow smuggle in a pencil and wrote poetry on toilet paper, when it was provided. These poems were mainly "an outpouring of private thoughts, and a way to stay sane." He was then sent to Sachsenhausen, a concentration camp in Germany. After three and a half terrible years, he was rescued by Swedish troops and returned to Norway.

He released a collection of work from this horrific time in Sachsenhausen entitled, *Vi overlever alt!* (*We survive everything!*). At this point he was a very well-known writer, and was highly respected for his unwavering resistance to fascism.

In his forward to *Vi overlever alt!*, he wrote:

I've wanted to be a servant and interpreter for those who maybe cannot find the words. When I was imprisoned, it was necessary to help mitigate my fellow prisoners' problems, intellectually, emotionally, and to help build us up. As long as I was free, I had to do everything I could to strengthen the self-confidence and solidarity for people who fight for their lives, and fight in the dark.



Arnulf Øverland's life and writing career was braided together by a handful of running attributes. Politically subversive, while being highly personal, combative, pensive, sardonic, and with a venomous disdain for christianity and an utter disgust of its blinding, detrimental, and dangerous herd mentality.

A stalwart atheist until the very end, from his death bed, he completed a transcription of "Christianity – The Tenth Plague". The lecture was published a year after he died in 1969. The book is called *En kjeters bekjennelser* (*Confessions of a Heretic*) and is still in print today.

–All quotes translated from the original Norwegian by Raude



Translator's Note

The translation of this lecture from Norwegian to English was rather straightforward. I kept up a very conversational tone, being as it was originally a spoken piece. The speech itself was presented in a very direct and simplistic manner, with little wordplay or highly contextual references, as well as a lack of overly complicated language. It is at times very sarcastic though, and he often plays Devil's Advocate in order to make a point. I've augmented the transcription here and there for the sake of clarification.

As for the usage of the word "God," I suppose it's fairly obvious in the way the term is used in this text.

God: The ubiquitous know-it-all who reigns from his throne in the sky. The jealous, moody, patriarchal tyrant of monotheism. Judge. Cop. Asshole.

– Raude

Schopenhauer's posthumous tracts one can find an aphorism known as "a conversation from the year 33":

"Have you heard the latest news?"

"No, has something happened?"

"The world is saved!"

"Pardon me?"

*"Yeah, The Good Lord has taken human form,
traveled to Jerusalem, and let himself be executed.
And this is how he tricked The Devil and redeemed
us all!"*

"Oh, that's truly wonderful!"

This is probably blasphemy. I can't say for sure what this is. All I know is priests whine and complain when someone offends them – or God, two things nearly one and the same. If, for example, they don't get to control the repertoire of the National Theater, or if we Heathens, (who actually go to the theater), have a desire to see a play that isn't particularly religious, they get hurt and offended, and they shout and complain like nothing else.

But however you carry yourself, I'm seriously worried that anyone who tries to give a clear and honest presentation of the christian faith will inevitably be found guilty of blasphemy.

I'll try to avoid that.

God is a creature who, at least externally, seems to resemble us. We are created in his image. He's a man. He has lots of hair, a huge beard, a nose, a mouth, intestinal tract, I assume, and as far as I know, a dick, or maybe not.

They are taught that "we are buried with Christ from baptism until death, and as Christ has risen from the dead, by The Father's glory, so shall we wake and wander in a new life."

The irrational, the immoral and dishonest "christian knowledge," forced upon children at an age when they're extremely suggestible and intellectually defenseless, bears fruit.

The prohibition of thoughts bears fruit.

In these schools, children are not allowed to ask about the things that interest them, things they find strange and unreasonable, their questions are answered in an evasive, ambiguous, or lying manner.

Their intellectual working capacity is exploited to teach them things they aren't allowed to question or criticize in any way.

The effect is detrimental.

The children become "intellectually poor," they become sleepy, obedient cowards – They become christians!

We cannot allow ourselves to hand over our children to christianized public schools whose only conceivable purpose is to turn them into intellectually decimated, stooping slaves of the capitalistic system.

The ninth plague god sent to humanity was total darkness. It covered Egypt for three days.

The tenth plague was a darkness that spread over all of Europe and the Americas, and it's lasted for (over 2,000) years.

Enough is enough.



This was a small sample of christianity in Norway today (1933). And I've heard many people say, it would all fall apart if we didn't have christianity to keep people inline.

Yes, I suppose it would all fall apart – for those that were trying to keep people in line.

As long as the church, State, and Labor party are safe, there will be no revolution. No revolution as long as people let the coming generations be raised by our Lords and Employers.



The knowledge children pick up in school bears fruit...

They are taught that in the old days there was an uncommonly good man, whose name was Abraham. And he lived to be 175 years old. And he was so uncommonly good that he wanted to kill his own son, because God wanted to "strengthen his faith."¹³

They are taught that it's not completely impossible for a corpse to become alive again, if one says: "Lazarus, come forth!"¹⁴ But it's extremely rare that god drives living prophets to heaven in a chariot of fire.

They are taught to "fear and love God." So, in his name we do not: curse, swear, practice magic, lie, or cheat.

He differentiates himself in other ways. We are also eternal creatures. It is known, we can never die. However, god has been around forever.

A beautiful day about 6,000 years ago, he created heaven and earth. He could have easily done it sooner, but just didn't want to. 6,000 years ago is when he felt like it.

He also made humans. Then he sent the devil to them to make them sin. He's all knowing, so he knew beforehand they'd succumb to temptation, but nevertheless, he becomes angry, and from now on he punishes all of humanity with eternal damnation.

We live for 60 or 70 years, and then for the rest of eternity we'll live in hell.

And so this is how it is for about 4,000 years. But since god is also good, it suddenly occurs to him to save us.

The good lord couldn't just forgive us. The only way god almighty could free us was to send "The Holy Spirit" down to a virgin and "herald" her. Shortly after, she gives birth to god's son who gets executed, but not because he's done something wrong, but for "our sins."

One might call that a scapegoat.

It's also strange that humans, in the midst of sin, commit a sin worse than all the others – killing the son of god – can be forgiven, and god is no longer angry.

But we're far from being saved. First, we must be dipped in water in the name of "The Holy Trinity" – which is to say the name of the three gods who are one god. 3=1.

I say water, but it's not that simple. In Luther's *Catechism*, used in schools today as it was in the 1500s, it states: "Baptism isn't just regular water, but water which is confined by God's command and united in the word of God."

¹³Genesis 22:10. NASB.

¹⁴John 11:38-44 NKJV.

No living person could comprehend this, but the children are bound to understand!

Let's look at that again. "Water confined by God's command!?"

Later on we eat god's body and drink his blood. This disgusting, cannibalistic magic is still practiced. But if you can manage to stomach this, you are saved. Then you can disgrace yourself in any way, as long as you pray to god afterwards. You just have to believe and be baptized.

This is no exaggeration. This is the essential lesson, the christian faith, the faith of my childhood. I have not forgotten that. It was beaten into me with a stick, and no one can take that from me!

Naturally, there were many people in the apostle's days who didn't convert so easily. There were many people who did not want to believe, which is why the apostles traveled around performing miracles. They "healed" people with prayer, oils and the laying of hands, and let them rise from the dead.

Not just humans but animals, too. A situation could present itself where it was necessary to perform wonders. And after searching the whole neighborhood, they may have had to start looking for a dead cat.

But with no comparison, the most powerful deed was performed by St. Peter. He woke a salt herring in the name of Jesus!

That story¹ is indeed apocryphal, but it's not forbidden to believe in. On the contrary, if one does, it only shows an extra degree of piety, and a special gift of faith.

Commanded!

"None of the horrors of war are incompatible with the holy and *punishing love* of God. Nor is the suffering of the many innocent victims during war."

Notice the "punishing love"!!

It's Hallesby's dearest subject matter, his complex.

"However, all war is not justified. It has to be a *just* war. But it can very well be an offensive war, because in modern warfare a preemptive strike is becoming an increasingly necessary means of defense."

For Hallesby, it's quite clear: When two factions are at war, one army is made up of criminals, and the other one of executioners.

Compulsory military service he defends with the reasoning that: "Every intelligent person must remind themselves that, for the benefit of everyone, the trained executioner is better than untrained."

"The Government has the right to gather many executioners, when war demands a mass execution of criminals... then the authorities acquire soldiers."

The more enthusiastic Hallesby gets, when he lets his fantasies about the executioner run wild, the more necessary it becomes for him to make The Hangman into a moral ideal.

"He can carry out the death penalty with cold indifference, or he can carry it out with deep love and compassion for the condemned."

Here we see it again, "The punishing Love." We may well use Hallesby's own terminology. But these quotes are not written by a man of common sense, they're written by a man who can't control himself.

¹Matthew 14:13-21, ESV.

"He cannot in any way engage in means of fighting which are against the laws of the country or which undermine the legal system on which an entire society is built upon."

Than what can he do?

Well, he can pray to god.

Continuing: "It's not charity, but justice the struggling worker wants."

Once again, sounds ok, but let's continue:

"This justice includes, first of all, the right to work. This issue however, contains great practical difficulty. It's often times The Union leaders who are most energetic in denying that right to those willing to work."

In short: The moral philosophy of strikebreaking.

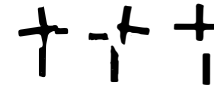
Hallesby doesn't neglect to point out that he fully understands the demand for social justice, and of course he's for justice. But it must be actualized on its own. To do anything which would serve to bring about this social justice, is against the will of god.

Hallesby is just as eager to work for peace:

"It's our ethical duty to prevent war with prayer"!!!

So far these means have not turned out to be effective. But Hallesby wouldn't take any other path. And any disarmament is out of the question.

In the chapter entitled "The Unfolding of Christian Life", Hallesby writes: "Both war and the death penalty were commanded by The Lord God."



Oh my god! They'll say.

However, there's no one who could seriously believe in this hopeless garbage. We should in heaven's name let the priests keep at it, but "we" cannot discuss such things. Besides, what's it worth? No one can reason with a believer. All arguments are just water off the duck's back to a christian.

Christianity has eternal life, and stupidity is also immortal. I'm not sure, but I'd imagine there's many people who currently believe in all kinds of things. But probably not as much as a hundred years ago. There was a time when religious illusions were commonplace amongst otherwise rational people.

Now the pews are mostly stocked with twisted minds and morons.

The decline is steady. And in the moment people overthrow the state church, and christianity is no longer an industry, (as it is for thousands of priests, teachers and students), in that moment it will suffer a deadly blow.

The decline is steady. Doctor of theology, Kristian Schelderup published a book about christianity in the light of the theory of relativity. Even Bishop Berggrav,² whose relationship to god is of a quite different and practical nature, might find himself in Copenhagen giving a lecture called: "Is Christianity Sufficiently Functional?"

The bible tells of a story where Jacob's wife Rachel, about to leave home, stole her father's gold so that god would be with her.³ You see, this is real faith.

But when god is "Relative" and Jesus is "functional" the church is in a sorry state.

But even if adults claim to uphold christian dogma, and mix up a milky soup of private religion where god is reduced to an abstract and vague philosophical "principle," a liquid gel that fills the entire universe (god is all!), this doesn't help the children. In school they're taught biblical history, psalm verses and catechism, and this ruins their minds.

The other day I remembered a verse, a kind of poetry that I probably learned 35 years ago, it goes like this:

*The scepter shall not be moved from Juda,
nor the emperors staff from his feet,
until the king of peace has come,
and the people completely obey.*

I learned this in school. With this knowledge, I should be well equipped for life!

It's not hard to see how intelligence is out of whack in most people. You don't need to conduct IQ tests, just pick up a newspaper.

misery. Later on, "The Rulers" have remodeled it to fit their needs: to suppress the poor.



Since Professor Hallesby¹² has been so kind as to direct the police's attention to me, I should, for the sake of politeness, direct the audience's attention to him.

He's a teacher with the Norwegian School of Theology, and consequently, a teacher for the majority of the theology students in Norway.

I have his book, *Den Kristelige Sedelære* (The Christian Moral Philosophy). Which is used as a textbook by the school of theology.

The whole book reeks of zeal. It's dark as a dungeon and as boring as eternal salvation. Completely unreadable. But I've managed to sample a few sections and skimmed through a few chapters. Among them, one named "Social Justice." Here's a few quotes.:

"From the Christian point of view, let us first declare, that there's

nothing objectionable about The Worker's Struggle to improve their conditions"

Ok, this sounds good, lets continue:

"But the Christian cannot engage in this struggle which is for worker's rights. It's the means and strategies of the struggle that are the deciding factor... First of all, a Christian must not sow dissatisfaction, envy or hatred in the heart of The Worker."

²Bishop Berggrav, 1884-1959. Norwegian lutheran bishop. Head of the church of Norway. Opposed the Nazi occupation of Norway.

³Genesis 31:30.

¹²Ole Kristian Hallesby. 1879-1961. Norwegian theologian, educator, and author. Lutheran. Snitch. Asshole.

All this is not done for the salvation of our souls. It's done because christianity is a factor in preserving society. God preserves the state, so it's only fair that the state preserves god.

The church was democratic. Christianity was the religion of the poor, (when it was poor itself). But it didn't take long to correct that.

I was in Russia once and had the opportunity to visit the museums of the Kremlin. The old majestic luxury was quite impressive. But it looked almost shabby next to the grandeur and splendor of the priests.

Amongst other things, there were cloaks that the priests must have used in god's honor. They were probably made of silk, but it was hard to see. It couldn't be seen because of spun gold embroideries and the most precious jewels formed a carapace on the outside!

The successors of christ! There's no authority except christ, say the priests. With that, we know we have them.

We see otherwise. We see it all the time. The church and priests engage in class struggle on the side of the Capitalists against the poor and oppressed, (whom they should be the spokesman for). And we see how they partake in nationalistic excess, warmongering and blessing of the weapons. In 1914, the priests participated everywhere in the imperialistic propaganda. And yet, if they had joined the peace movement, they could have prevented the war!

A friend of monetary power, and an enemy of truth and justice, of science and art, enlightenment and culture, that's the church!

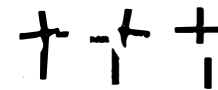
Now, I'm sure one would say that I'm blaming christianity for all the world's misery. The theologians would surely see it this way, because they believe that christianity has come to people from the outside and transformed them.

I believed that god neither created humans, nor that christianity remodeled us. A long time ago, a small flock of homeless wanderers created christianity; to fit their needs: to find comfort in their

Hand in hand with a blind faith in authority walks an undying aversion to comprehension, a true fear of facts and a passion for the irrational.

Maybe one gives up praying to god. Maybe one gives up trying to change god's mind, whether by giving him various information, or by refreshing his memory, for example: " You know dear God, who knows everything"... blah, blah, blah...

The idea that god knows everything already sounds a bit fishy. This all seems like an elaborate scheme to cover up a lot of mistrust.



At this point, one may gravitate towards theosophy and mysticism.

Even if one does not take part in spiritual rituals, at least "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."⁴

Simply by quoting this trite banality, one is a "deep thinker" and not a "superficial materialist." Never has human intellectual cowardice found a more redeeming phrase!

There's physics and chemistry, and like all sciences, there are unsolved problems. There are most likely undiscovered forces of nature. But there are no gods or any other ghosts "in heaven and earth." You'll find these in the head of the "deep thinker."

There're many things we don't know, and many things we want to know. But every time our knowledge, with the help of science, is nudged ahead a bit, a wave of terror rolls through the congregation. They're afraid it might make god sick, that he might die, that christianity might dissolve, the christianity that was supposed to

⁴Quoted from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

protect us from knowledge. They're afraid a light may pierce the darkness, the light they themselves bury away to avoid.

In other words, one is afraid to lose the father. Afraid to grow up. Afraid to engage one's individual fight for life and do so at one's own peril. And people are afraid to die. Therefore, the father shall live forever. He'll help us when things go wrong and danger finds us. And after death, one will be allowed to go to him and remain with him.

A perfect compromise between a bitter experience and a desperate desire.

Few people ever really grow up. Therefore, most people need a god to worship. These are "God's children."

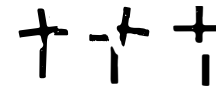
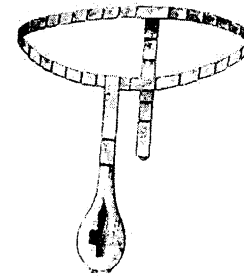
The ancient Egyptians noticed that corpses tended to decompose and that once one was no longer alive, one was dead. The situation was dire, so they picked up the art of embalming. Coupled with certain sorcery, it was no longer out of the question that they may rise again. These spells generally contained the most energetic proof that the deceased had lost none of their vitality.

"I breathe with my nose, I chew with my mouth, I run, I am Osiris!"

Of course, one could not go around embalming the commoner, that would be way too expensive. But at least the priests were beatified.

Later on, people discovered that the "soul," with the greatest of ease, could separate from the body and live forever. This is a democratic and somewhat foggy thought. One imagines the soul as a fairly ætheric body, and a "shadow." It doesn't draw much attention to itself, and can only be seen through "spirit photography" or be contacted through a "medium." It doesn't have much to say about the afterlife and has lost most of its common sense, but otherwise is quite content.

The evil and the unbelievers know well enough that the soul simply passes away. If not, the sensory organs would supply a steady stream of new impressions.



From the christian perspective, you might hear how some of these things are true about the church, however, that has nothing to do with christianity. Christianity is a doctrine that cannot be de-valued by the shortcomings of the church.

Other theologians say that christianity is not a doctrine but a way of life. And that the tree will be known by its fruits.

What a person believes is a private matter, as long as they keep their faith to themselves, but people are not always content to do so. They tend to congregate with fellow believers, and it's this congregation that makes up the christian church.

From the outside looking in, church and christianity are one in the same. What the christians *believe* is none of our business. What the christians *do* we cannot overlook, because they inflict violence. Now one might object, this is outdated. This may be of historical evidence, but not relevant today. Well apparently it's relevant enough for the state to employ thousands of wizards in thousands of churches across the land. And relevant enough for christian radio programs to be broadcast all year round. And relevant enough that all conservative newspapers have special Sunday observances.

howling. And when the damned have been burning in Hell for thousands of years, they will still remain there for a long time. And be taken from one painful punishment to the next, and this will continue for all eternity with no hope that it will end.

...No one will pity them but the angels, and the chosen ones will take pleasure in their misery, and wish them even more pain.



The christian sexual moral is a chapter that deserves its own criticism.

Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully, it's been said, has already committed adultery in his heart. Really? Whoever shares this opinion just isn't right in the head. When a young man sees a pretty girl, he wants her. It's just so peculiar that this, which is a biological necessity, is also a mortal sin.

Practically all the church fathers have agreed to designate erotic emotions as sinful, beauty and grace a devilish illusion, and Woman as a gateway drug to Satan.

The perverted church fathers have really succeeded in making love dirty, and poisoning humanity with such sexual anxiety that medieval Europe would look like a giant madhouse.

And even in our times, young people are often half-mad when they notice their own sex-drives. The majority of people are not having healthy sex-lives, and in turn, are unhappy, fractured and dysfunctional.

These are the fruits of the christian sexual moral.

The congregation grows pale with terror every time it feels threatened with a new thought. And so they gather themselves for resistance and counter attack. And their battle cry: "Materialism is obsolete!"

Not long ago there was a young "idealist" who wrote for *Samtiden*⁵ He'd heard something about the possibility of splitting atoms and that the concept of matter was being revised. Could matter no longer be trusted? In the end, does it even exist? Maybe it's all just "spirit?"

And the desire for it to be true immediately turned into the belief that it was true:

Materialism is obsolete!

First of all, what does it mean that matter is spirit?

My boots are spirit?

And this "spirit," who or what is it anyway? Could it by any chance be god?

And secondly, as the concept of matter is always being revised by physics, every scientific way of thinking becomes obsolete. But the theologians believe. They *believe*.

It's the very principle of causation one wants to eliminate. The principle that: everything happens for a reason. (And nothing happens for supernatural reasons.)

But the causation principle is nothing more than the way we think. The only way we think. If we gave this up, we couldn't think thoughts. Then we'd all be theologians.

A young idealist, and a reporter for *Tidens Tegn*⁶, was sent to listen

⁵Norwegian political and literary magazine (1890-present).

⁶Norwegian newspaper (1910-1941).

to a lecture given by the German professor Heisenberg, who wrote: "Even the deadest thing is alive." "Atoms are living creatures with verifiable intelligence. Atoms are driven by a living, conscious cognition." Which is more than can be said for *Tidens Tegn*.

This tendency to finagle god in through some loophole, or sneak him in through the back door disguised as "spirit" rather than matter, or as a "living conscious intelligence," is so common, you run the risk of bumping into god even in university laboratories.

Throughout the ages humans have always admired nature's sense of purpose. But it's worth mentioning that very few of us have seen other worlds, so it's tough to make any comparisons.

We develop our abilities by using them. Our intelligence has also developed having to orient to this world. Our mind is not prepared to comprehend anything else. Therefore, not even the most loquacious portrayal of heaven and hell would contain elements that aren't known to us, at least on some level.

One has the choice to adorn the angels with white clothes, trumpets and feathers- or to let them disappear between the clouds.

People have always been lost in thought about nature's purposefulness, and always "philosophized" that such a beautiful world must have been "created" by someone. It couldn't have created itself, it wouldn't function so precisely. The moon would fall to the earth if there were no "puppet master."

But not even such a wonderful puppet master could have created himself. Think about how precisely he functions! There must be a puppet master to control him: There must be a whole dynasty of puppet masters – unless we accept the explanation given to us by the god Set. The ancient Egyptian gods have also left behind scripture. The god Set says plainly: "I have created myself, as I have sprung from my own loins." Seems like the simplest solution.

By investigating christianity, as well as other religions, one will quickly see, there's no limit to what people can be made to believe. People can be made to believe extreme absurdity. And nothing is easier than making a camel go through the eye of a needle. No one demands that all the doctrines appear plausible, and no

There's nothing more useful than reflecting on the agonies of Hell. It makes our hearts more pure than gold. These words are worth more than a thousand pieces of gold and silver, if they are obeyed. Neither gold nor silver, goods nor fortune can help us on Judgement Day. However, our daily reflections of Hell will help us...

... God wants man to speak of Hell at all times, in all places, at parties, chapels and on the road, etc...

Imagine a glowing pit of sulphur and tar, in which ghastly worms, terrible snakes, scorpions, and dragons writhe around and bite the damned, every day their agonies increase...

...When one thinks of such things, one forgets all about carnal lust.

The fourth chapter is about "the worst torment of Hell," namely, "to be alienated from God."

The fifth chapter is about a milder punishment though:

Fire and brimstone and a terrible storm will rain down upon them. They will be tightly bound, neither able to move hand nor foot. Vulnerable and powerless they will be. They will not be able to move a snake from their eyes... in Hell there is an inextinguishable fire, an immortal snake, miserable crying, pitiful gnashing of teeth, an insufferable stench, a fearsome devil's sin, the terrible wrath of God, torment of insatiable evil, insurmountable despair, eternal and never-ending death, heat and frost, hunger and thirst, fear and terror, difficulty and work, darkness and mist, smoke and steam, anxiety and distress, moaning and grief, torment and pain, awful and abominable sin. Indeed eternal damnation. It will be like a roaring sea of tears and

The masochistic ideal is the whipped, crown of thorns wearing, crucified christ. The sadistic ideal is the executioner.

Early on, the masochistic character manifests as a christian's tendency towards martyrdom, asceticism, humility and misery.

Later on, sadism emerges in the victorious church's lust for power, its bloody extermination of non-christians and the church father's voluptuous fantasies of hell. None of these characteristics are especially moral.



I have a pious and edifying book, which was printed in 1632.

This book contains three tracts. The first is "Extremum Judicium" ("The Final Judgement"). The second, "Beatorum Delicium" ("The Chosen Ones Delight in the Kingdom of God"). The third, "Dannatorum Supplicum" ("The Eternal Agony of the Damned in Hell").

This last tract begins with the church father Johannes Chrysostom saying:

one's embarrassed that they generally seem to be devoid of logic.

So why do people believe in them?

Clearly, something must be done to satisfy the congregation. Bitter arguments could arise over whether a bottle of wine is actually the blood of Jesus Christ, or just a bottle of wine, or possibly both. (As is Luther's opinion.) But on the essential points, most religions agree: there is a good god who created the universe and controls it with great competence and cunning, and there's life after death where people are either punished or rewarded based on what they deserve. Theologians are rewarded, and heretics are punished. The punishment being far more important.

One might say that religions emerge out of clear and unequivocal pipe dreams.

Most religions have three gods: a father, a mother, and of course, a son.

In the struggle for a meaningful existence, those that suffer defeat will take to dreaming themselves away. He escapes into childhood. He identifies as the son. He seeks comfort and love from the mother, and makes her stick up for him against the strong and powerful father.

Because of neurotic difficulties with the church fathers⁷, the christian trinity fragmented. The mother was pushed aside, and a strange surrogate was invented: "The Holy Ghost." This holy ghost was voted in by a narrow majority at the first council of Nicaea with pressure from Emperor Constantine⁸.

⁷Highly influential group of christian theologians. Instrumental in codifying the theological and scholarly foundations of the early christian church. Predominantly active from 200 to 700 AD.

⁸A council of christian bishops convened by Roman emperor Constantine the First in 325 AD. Held in the Bithynian city of Nicaea (present-day Iznik, in the Bursa province of Turkey).

Later the catholics corrected this, and elevated the status of the mother. At the same time, making Jesus the little baby who sits on his mother's lap. Joseph stands in the background and represents the holy father.

This happy family is immediately far more attractive than the tortured misery nailed to the walls in every protestant church.

The catholic picture of "The Holy Family" is easy for people to identify with. It also strengthens the libidinal and "erotic" bonds between the child and its divine parents.



When one sees how religion has sprung us from people's fear of death and the desire to return to the child's protected position in the family, it all makes sense.

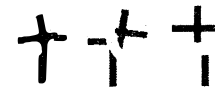
The infantile and wish-based way of thinking naturally falls back into pre-logic trains of thought. Religious thinking is older than logic.

The christians themselves call their religion the faith of their childhood. But this self-realization doesn't keep them from demanding that adults keep the childhood faith.

At first it was a pious wish. When christians were a small, oppressed minority, they strictly adhered to freedom of religion.

But the second they came into power, they granted none of that to others.

During the first centuries of early christianity, christians were often oppressed and persecuted. Church history does not try and



Occasionally we'd like to see christian morality express itself in fairly decent behavior. Furthermore, a moral, which doesn't seem to apply to its adherents, but whose prohibitions and commandments shall only be imposed upon others, isn't worth a lot. And as for this "love" which mainly manifests as sadism and a lust for murder, well, we could all do without that.

If the church can in no way realize these ideals, then maybe the moral thoughts found in the gospels have value?

Well, perhaps, but one can find them better and more clearly expressed by the pagan thinkers of the olden age. The morals of the gospels may be sufficient for its time, but they're not completely christian. No more christian than the dogma, no more christian than the sacraments, which exist in all religions, and no more christian than god.

In his case, the circumstances are somewhat unclear. But we must assume god became a christian as early as the beginning of our time.

The most characteristic feature of the christian moral is not its altruism, and even less so its tolerance or humanity – the most characteristic feature of the christian moral is the sadomasochistic veneer it has applied over the teachings of the Stoics.

Sadism and masochism are two special forms of perversity.

Sadism refers to the desire to inflict pain or punishment upon one's lover. Masochism refers to the desire to have pain or pleasure inflicted upon one's self. Both sadistic and masochistic practices can be joined with or otherwise replace "standard" copulation.

on the payroll. It's not as important as Jens Thiis¹¹ would have you believe.

But the church's' music undoubtedly has cultural value. It would be strange if we couldn't find a single asset.

The Bible contains everything a christian needs to know. The church father Tertullian declares: "Any branch of science is superfluous, because we have the gospels. Not only are they superfluous, but harmful and blasphemous because they dare to add something to the word of God."

Augustine, however, makes an exception for astronomy because it allows us to study the moon's orbit, and how else would we correctly know when easter is?

Once the church had fully secured its power, it was quite risky to study any of the sciences. It went very badly for Galileo and Giordano Bruno, who were put to death. They were infidels. They refused to believe that the earth was the center of the universe. This belief was punishable by death in their day.

The church's attitude towards art is very similar. If it serves the church it is tolerated and paid for, if it acts independently it's banned as sinful, abominable and profane.

But we should keep the christian morals, right? Maybe just get rid of the dogma? Christian morality certainly represents a huge step forward compared to paganism, right?

Just think about all the love! Love thy enemy etc., etc.

I'm not so sure. If a man says he's so nice that he loves his enemy, I'm not sure most people would believe him. I think we'd say he's a fool.

hide this fact. (According to professor Harnack⁹, it's exaggerated quite a bit.) But one thing they're reluctant to talk about, (or drown it out with theology), is: Never has man sacrificed to a more bloodstained moloch than the christian church!

According to Voltaire's calculations, which are considered conservative, over 10 million people have been slaughtered in the name of God.

In Spain from 1471 to 1781, 32,000 heretics were burned to death and 290,000 were left to rot in jail. God is love. The tortures committed by the courts of the Inquisition can only be compared to the hell that priests fantasized about when they had nothing better to do. They succeeded in this way by literally exterminating the heresy.

Then what do the priests do? Oh yeah, they invent witchcraft.

They found it quite reasonable that periodically women couldn't resist the devil's temptations, as well as being tricked into casting disease upon people and animals.

Sermons of fire and brimstone would occasionally lead to epidemics of hysteria amongst the people. It wasn't unusual that women actually believed they had sex with the devil. This must be prevented.

According to Alfred Lehmann in his book *Superstition and Magic from the Oldest Times to Our Day*,

For a witch to be taken to court, an accusation did not need to be supported by evidence, a simple malediction would do. And there were no consequences for the accuser if the accusations proved to be false. And they nearly never did. Mostly because the evidence was in the form of the

¹¹Norwegian art historian. Conservator and prominent museum director. 1870-1942.

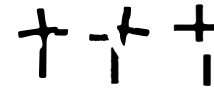
⁹Prominent German church historian. Lutheran. 1851-1930.

witch's confession. And these confessions were brutally extracted through torture. And if a witch didn't confess, despite the torture, then her guilt was obvious, because only with the help of The Devil could she be so stubborn.

Six women in the town of Lindheim, Germany were tortured to confess that they dug up the corpse of a child from the cemetery to be used in their magic potions. They confessed. A spouse of one of the women managed to have the grave opened up in the presence of the local authorities. Of course, they found the child's body untouched and in the casket. But the inquisitor persisted. He claimed that the child's untouched body was a devilish illusion, and as they all had confessed, one must trust the confessions more than one's senses. and so they all were burnt alive¹⁰.

Exactly how many over the centuries were burned at the stake is impossible to establish. But they managed in one single city, in one single year, to kill a thousand people. And there were whole landscapes throughout Germany where only two women had survived after the prosecutions were stopped. And men had also been far from spared.

All the experts agree, that the number of "witches" murdered is counted in the millions.



I'm not sure to what extent later eugenicists will find this reasoning significant, but the fact remains: The glory days of the church coincide exactly with an alarming cultural decline.

There could be many reasons for this. One of them is obvious: The church has always been the bitterest of enemies to all culture and intellectual life.

Theologians would explain how cultures of antiquity have been preserved in the monasteries. Yeah well, they preserved the culture, they hid it well, and then it disappeared.

Indeed, a few monks here and there sat around copying the works of Aristotle. In other places, different monks sat there eradicating irreplaceable manuscripts and writing prayers to god on them.

In this context, it's not so important that popes had a few painters

¹⁰A well-documented witch hunt that took place in Lindheim, Germany in 1664. For further reading check out *The Witch Hunter – A Historic Novel* by Peter Heisser.